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Resurrection of The Lord - Truth or Myth

Introduction

For those who remember “Little House on the Prairie”, there were two characters the viewers loved to hate, Nellie Olson and her mother Harriet. Recently Harriet died, her real name was Katherine MacGregor and on hearing of her death, Melissa Gilbert (a co-worker) wrote, “I really loved her and I find great comfort knowing that she is at peace and, per her beliefs, her soul has moved on to its next incarnation”. It was those last statements which caught my attention and caused me to consider, “What does happen to our souls at the moment of death?” Unless the Lord comes in our lifetime, each of us will die when in a moment of time we leave this world and go into the next. All one has gained in this life, power, possessions, prestige is all gone. Here we have a sojourn of a few years and now at 74 years I look back over life, no longer a middle aged individual and now more than a senior citizen. What does life move onto, where is it heading?

- a) Some believe that when they die it would be like the death of an animal. They have no eternity, they die and their body decays to dust.
- b) Some of the world’s religions teach something of a reincarnation, either going upward toward God likeness or being reincarnated into the same caste, or as an animal.
- c) What about bodies that are put into frozen nitrogen and kept until a remedy can be found for the sickness they had, thinking that they can be thawed and live again as before.

These perspectives are totally wrong. None have any iota of evidence, and yet I ought not to say, “None have an iota of evidence”. The evidence they do have is, they are contrary to the Scriptures of truth from the God who cannot lie. They are nothing more than the imaginations of individuals who reject the word of God. God has decreed, “It is appointed unto men once to die” (Heb. 9:27), and that being so, such ideas are void of any truth and are the lies of Satan.

Did Jesus Rise? Myth or Truth

The foundation for believing in the resurrection is founded on the reality that Jesus rose from the dead. If there was no other evidence that would be sufficient, however, the question is, “Did He rise from the dead?” Many are the arguments made that His body just went to corruption like any other human body or that he never really died but only swooned and was later revived. Is the resurrection a myth or a truth?

If we are to accept Biblical and non-Biblical documents then we must accept the historical accuracy of not only the scriptures, but also the writings of Josephus, Pliny the Younger, and the Jewish Talmud. Therein there is the statements that Jesus of Nazareth was crucified, was buried, and rose again, and His body was missing from the tomb. Against this there are several fake arguments presented, such as:

Fake Arguments		Facts
1) Jesus swooned on the cross and then when apparently dead, was buried but revived in the cool air of the tomb. This is utter foolishness.		<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Roman soldiers said He was dead and they knew when a person was dead or in a coma.2. It was only after the Lord was dead that the soldier piecled His side with a spear (Jn. 19:34). None of the other wounds were fatal wounds, but if the Lord had not been dead this would have been a “killing wound”. It was by this wound that Thomas was convinced that the Man standing before Him was the one who had been, three days ago, the corpse on the cross and was buried and had now risen. The spear wound was the only mortal wound and gave the assurance of death.

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2)	The Lord had a twin brother who actually died while the Lord escaped the religious leaders and the political powers. This is so far from reality for	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Lord was born, it is recorded that, "She brought forth her first born son" (singular) (Matt. 1:25; Lk. 2:7) not sons. 2. The Holy Spirit spoke in the singular when He said, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee" (Lk. 1:35). 3. Assuming the Lord did have a twin brother, it was a secret kept from the disciples for they would not have waited to see the end as Peter did, and the women who stood at the cross weeping were mistaken. 4. Again if it was a twin brother, how did his body escape from the tomb leaving the grave clothes vacated?
3)	His body was stolen from the tomb. This was what the soldiers were told to tell others. This leads to the question, "Who would have had a motive for removing the body?"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Jewish leaders wanted the Lord to be put to death so they had no motive in removing the body and giving evidence of the resurrection. 2. There was only one individual who believed the Lord would rise from the dead and that was the thief on the cross. None of the disciples did and indeed mourned His death, even embalming the body, so they never expected Him to rise from the dead. So the decision has to be made, "Was the preparations etc., all a hoax, the preaching afterward built on a futile foundation, and the changing of lives an imaginary thing? Certainly they had no expectation of a resurrection or the removing of the body to create a new religion. 3. The Roman guard was there and the Roman seal, therefore, to remove it was a serious offense in which one would have defied the powers of Rome and paid a very heavy price, possibly the death sentence. They had no reason for removing the body.
4)	<p>The disciples went to the wrong tomb.</p> <p>a) Of all the arguments against the resurrection of the Lord this is one of the most pathetic. I have stood at the grave of my grandfather some 50 years after his death and would not mistake it for another. Does anyone really think that three days after the Lord was entombed the disciples went to the wrong tomb?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Surely if such was the case all the religious authorities had to do was point out the right tomb with the body of the Lord still lying there. The women had within the 72 hours from entombment to the Sunday morning prepared spices (Mk. 16:1; Lk. 23:56; 24:1; Jn. 19:40). These women saw where He was laid (Mk. 15:47). How could multiple persons forget which tomb it was after three days? 2. Furthermore, when the women told the disciples, Peter and John went to the tomb (Jn. 20:2-9). Did they also go to the wrong tomb? 3. The Jews knew which tomb the body of the Lord was laid in (Matt. 27:62-66) and all they would have needed to do to disprove the resurrection was to show which was the real tomb which would have been sealed and have the Romans watching it.

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5)	It was a “spirit”.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Lord said, “A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Lk. 24:39). 2. After His resurrection the Lord had a literal body that was touched by Mary Magdalene (Jn. 20:17). 3. Years later John wrote, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life” (1 Jn. 1:1). 4. Thomas was invited to put his hand into the wound in His side (Jn. 20:27).
6)	It was a myth, the Lord never rose.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Spirit of God used Peter to convey a vital piece of information when he wrote, “We have not followed cunningly devised fables” (myths) (2 Pet. 1:16). This is important because if it is not a myth the Holy Spirit was propagating a lie in having people believe Christ was raised. 2. Furthermore, the idea of the resurrection of the Lord being a myth did not originate until several generations after the Lord’s ascension. Before that, there have been hundreds of eyewitnesses who could, with integrity, deny the myth story. 3. It is interesting that it was not until the eye witnesses were all dead that this foolishness began to be taught.

Thank God we have a Living Saviour who lives in the “power of an endless life” (Heb. 7:16), and is alive forevermore (Rev. 1:18). Never again will sinful wicked satanically inspired men mock our blessed Lord, never again will they present mock homage to Him, never again will they crucify Him, and bless God never again will He rise from the dead. I leave this part with the words of the Lord, “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” (Rev. 1:18).

. . . Rowan Jennings

